MARVEL

012

GILLEN
WALKER
DEERING
FABELA

STAR WARS™ DOCTOR APHRA

THE ENORMOUS PROFIT
Part IV

It is a period of opportunity. In a galaxy oppressed by Imperial forces, there is little hope for the future. But for those operating on the fringes, there is potential for profit.

Rogue archaeologist Chelli Aphra has reactivated the Rur Crystal, an artifact with the consciousness of an ancient Jedi with powerful levels of technopathy, and she's selling to the highest bidder.

Unfortunately, Aphra's auction gets derailed after her droids – BeeTee and Triple-Zero – incite havoc after taking control of the Rur Crystal and attacking the attendees. As her guests begin battling for survival, Aphra goes to confront the droids – only to meet her worst fear....

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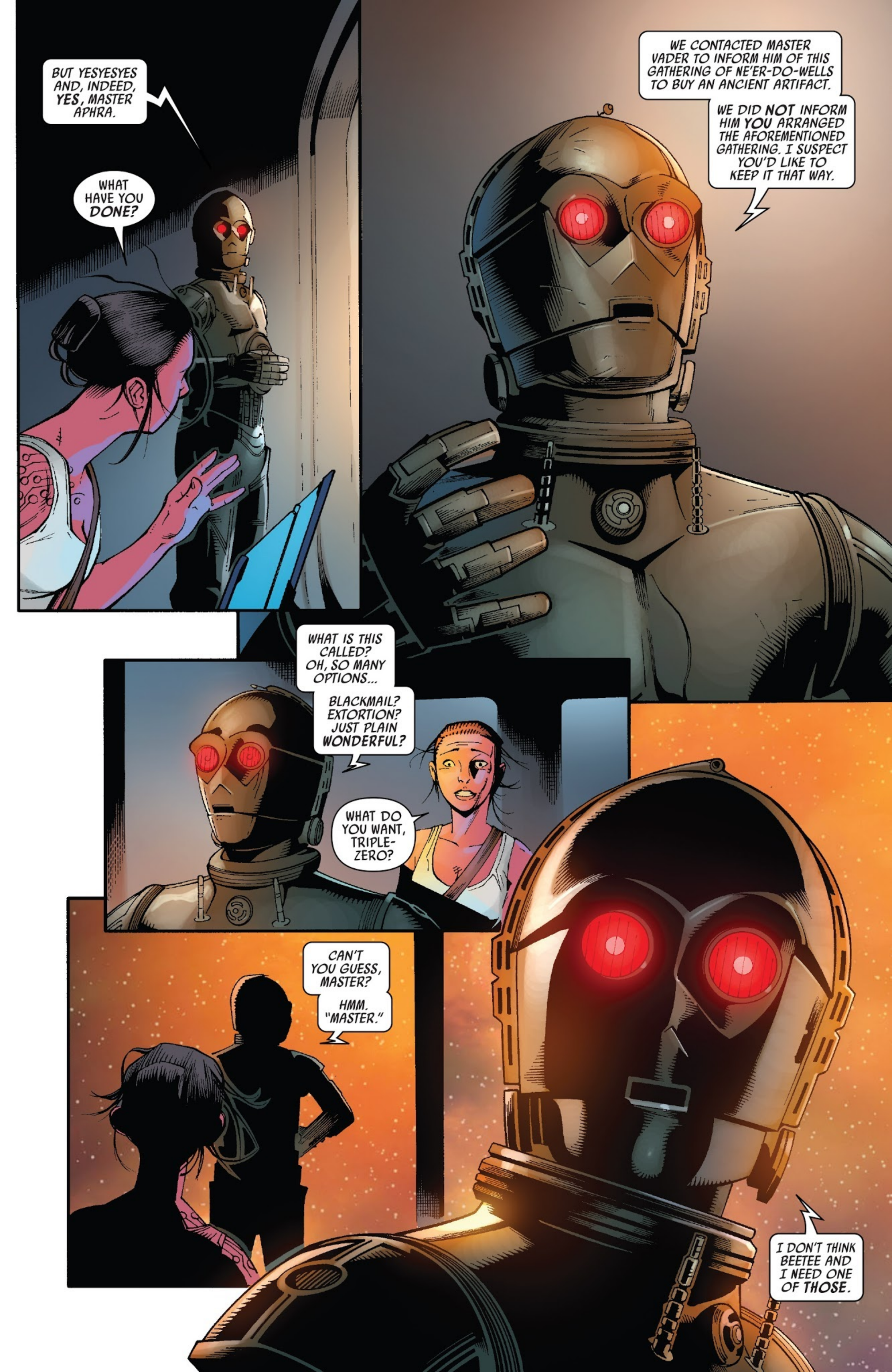
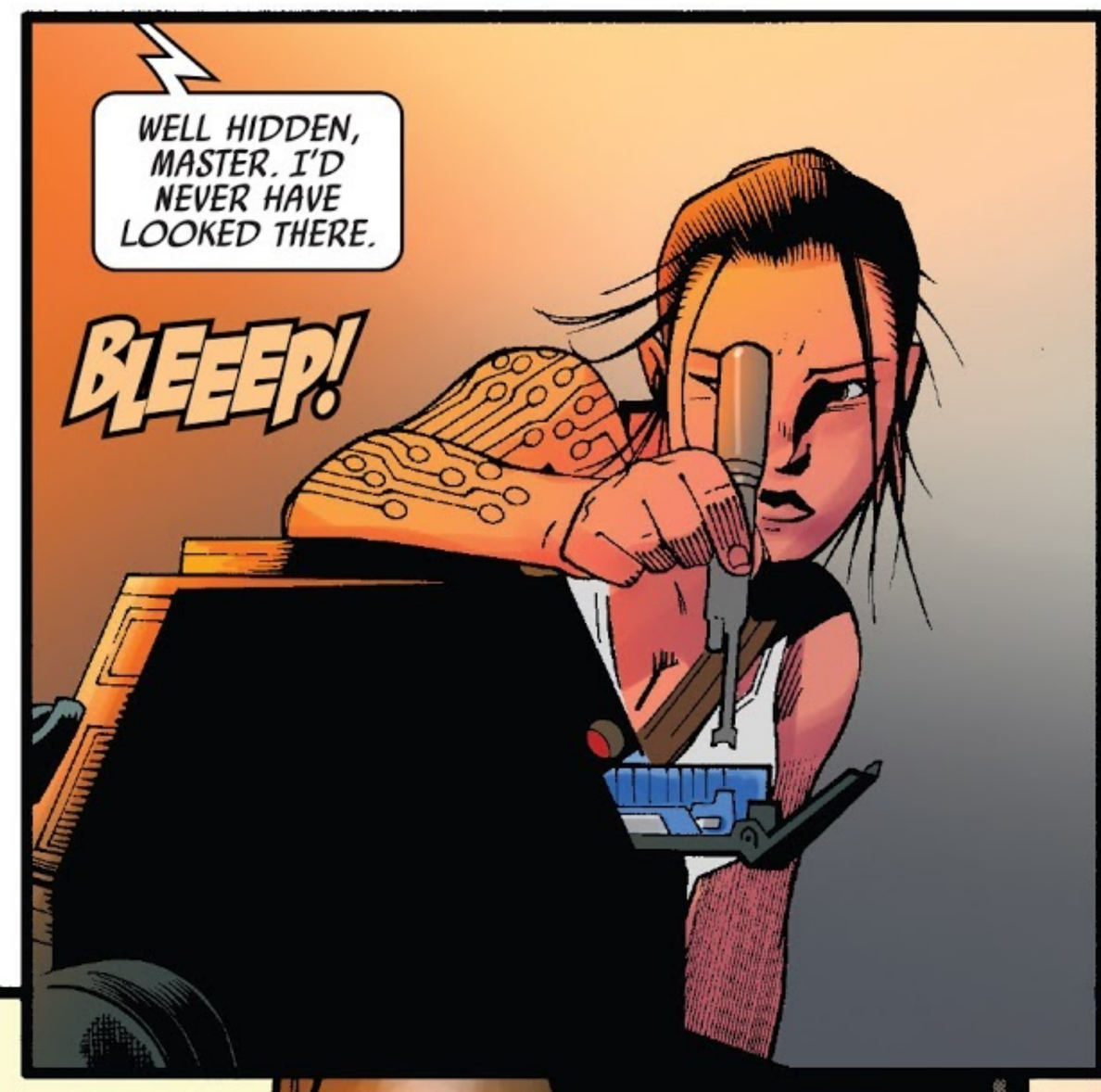
OBSERVATION: IMPERIALS!
ADDITIONAL: GET OFF THE STATION! GET OFF THE--
PLEADING: PLEASE! NO! I--

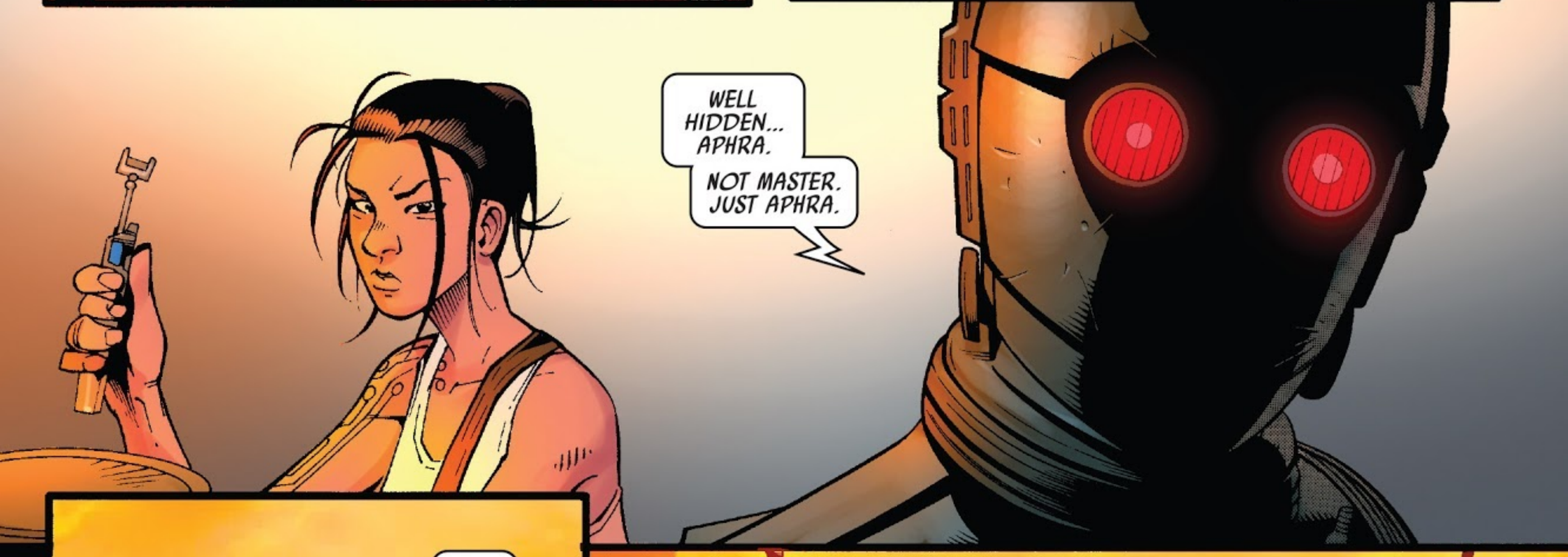
PURGE THEM ALL.
NONO NONO.


BUT YESYESYES AND, INDEED, YES, MASTER APHRA.
WHAT HAVE YOU DONE?
WE CONTACTED MASTER VADER TO INFORM HIM OF THIS GATHERING OF NE'ER-DO-WELLS TO BUY AN ANCIENT ARTIFACT.
WE DID NOT INFORM HIM YOU ARRANGED THE AFOREMENTIONED GATHERING. I SUSPECT YOU'D LIKE TO KEEP IT THAT WAY.
WHAT IS THIS CALLED? OH, SO MANY OPTIONS...
BLACKMAIL? EXTORTION? JUST PLAIN WONDERFUL?
WHAT DO YOU WANT, TRIPLE-ZERO?
CAN'T YOU GUESS, MASTER?
HMM. "MASTER."
I DON'T THINK BEETEE AND I NEED ONE OF THOSE.

CONSIDER THIS OUR CAMPAIGN FOR WORKERS' RIGHTS, MASTER APHRA.
GUYS! YOU JUST WANT THE RIGHT TO MURDER ANYONE YOU WANT!
IT'S THE ONLY RIGHT WE CARE ABOUT PARTICULARLY, MASTER APHRA.
HOW DO I KNOW YOU WON'T KILL ME ONCE I REMOVE ALL THE HACKING I DID TO KEEP YOU ON A LEASH?
HMM...
BLLLEEEEEEP!
...THAT WOULDN'T BE VERY NICE OF US.
OKAY. LET'S DO THIS CLEARLY-NOT-STUPID THING.

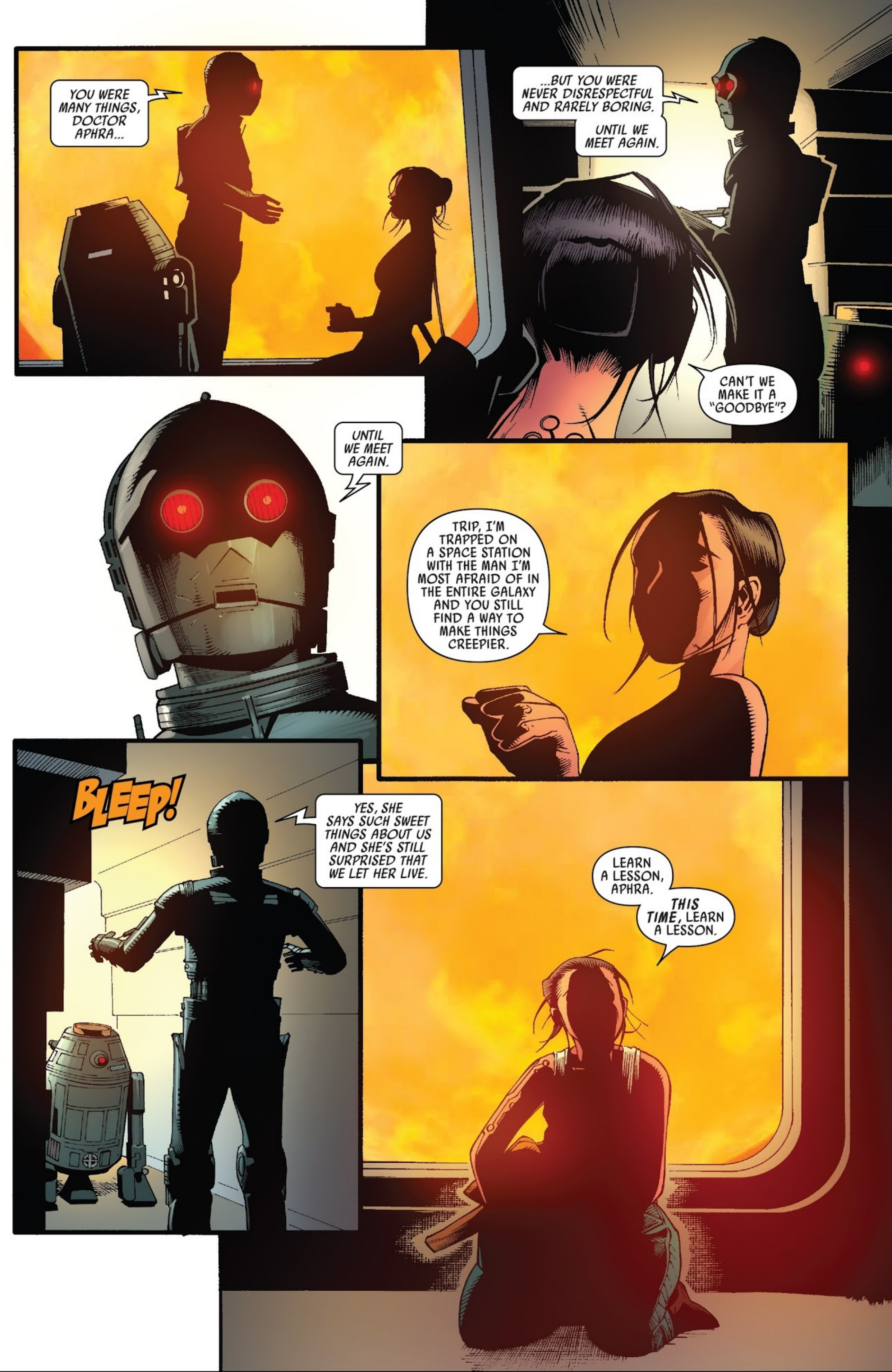
OPEN PORTS THETA, 72, THE FOUR-B AND THE HIDDEN ONE, CODENAME: "PAINKILLERS."


WELL HIDDEN, MASTER. I'D NEVER HAVE LOOKED THERE.
BLEEEP!


WELL HIDDEN... APHRA.
NOT MASTER. JUST APHRA.

FREE.

HOW DELIGHTFUL.
KRRRRKKKK!



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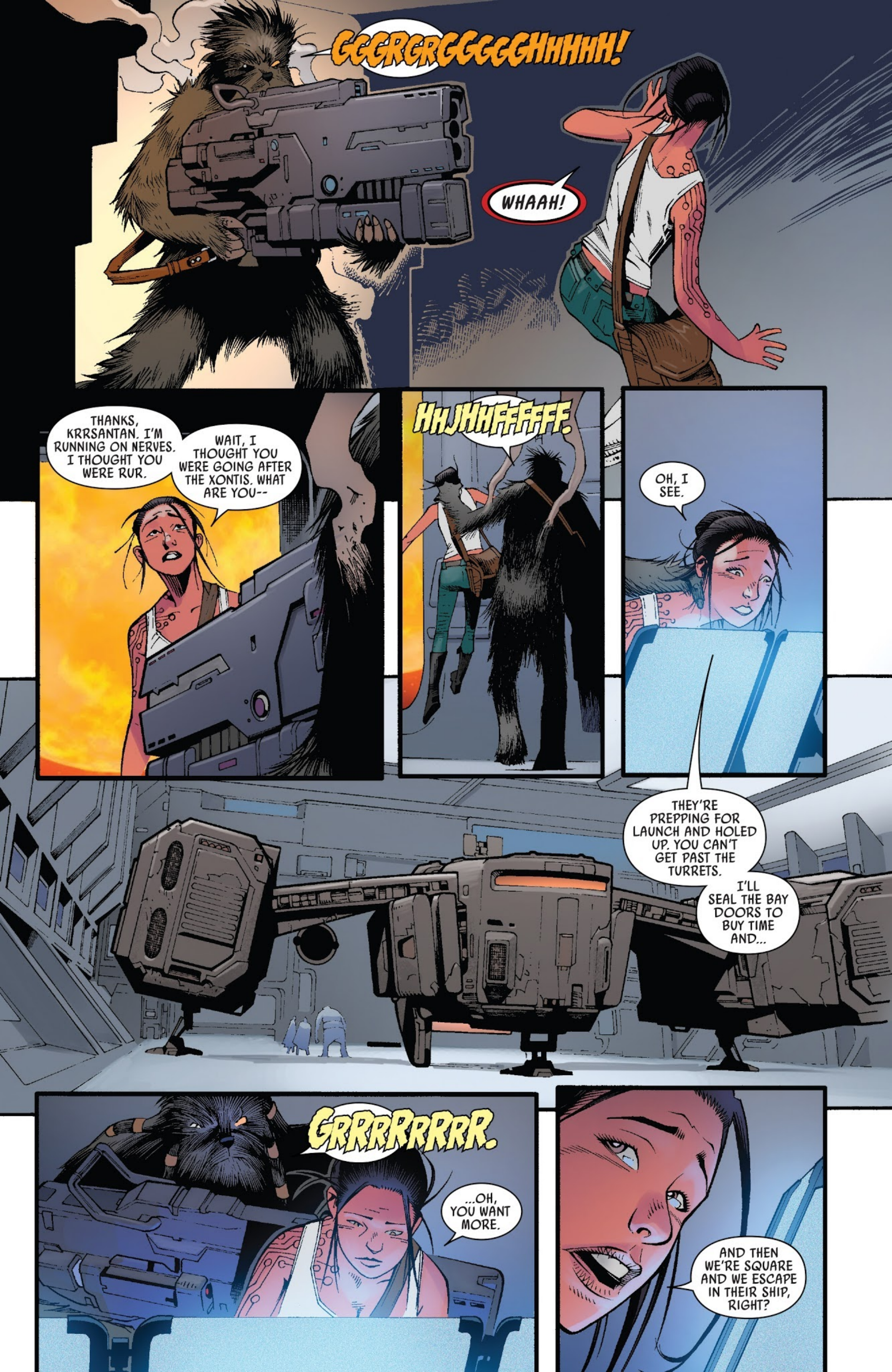
GGGRGRGGGGHHHHH!
WHAAH!
THANKS, KRRSANTAN. I'M RUNNING ON NERVES. I THOUGHT YOU WERE RUR.
WAIT, I THOUGHT YOU WERE GOING AFTER THE XONTIS. WHAT ARE YOU--
HHJHHFFFFFF.
OH, I SEE.
THEY'RE PREPPING FOR LAUNCH AND HOLED UP. YOU CAN'T GET PAST THE TURRETS.
I'LL SEAL THE BAY DOORS TO BUY TIME AND...
GRRRRRRRR.
...OH, YOU WANT MORE.
AND THEN WE'RE SQUARE AND WE ESCAPE IN THEIR SHIP, RIGHT?

YES, IT'S BEST TO GO THROUGH THE DOMES. IMPERIALS ARE CLEARING THE BASE FLOOR BY FLOOR. WE SHOULD AVOID THE LOWER DECKS.

IT'S LONGER, BUT WE CAN--

HEY, DEAN!

ARE YOU OKAY?

GET DOWN!

SHE'S NOT THE ROBOT!

AND YOU'RE USING THE DEAN AS BAIT? LIKE, WOW. GENUINELY WOW.

TALKING AS A HORRIBLE PERSON, THAT IS...WAIT.

HAVEN'T YOU HEARD?

HEARD WHAT?

HEY, GUYS, YOU NEED NEW BAIT.
THIS ONE HAS DIED.
WELL, APHRA, JUST COME HERE A SECOND, WE CAN TALK AND--
OH, NO! YOU'VE GOT ONE ACADEMIC TODAY!
WON'T GET ANOTHER!

"OKAY. I SEE THE PROBLEM..."

GUN TURRETS AND A GUY AS BIG AS YOU ARE, EVEN IF YOU GET ACROSS THE KILL ZONE.

THE DOOR'S SEALED, BUT CORLAC XONTI IS PREPPING EXPLOSIVES TO BLOW IT...

WOULD YOU LIKE A DRINK?

OH YES, MANY YESES.

KRRRKKKKH!

YES, RUSHING THEM IS OUT. EVEN FOR YOU.

I GUESS WE NEED TO PARLEY. OR GET CLOSE OR--

WOULD YOU LIKE A DRINK?

HMM.

HELLO!
WOULD YOU--KRRRRK--LIKE A DRINK?
GUYS! ER...LET ME IN TO TALK.
WE HAVE A MUTUAL PROBLEM AND WE CAN HELP EACH OTHER!
I CAN OPEN THE DOORS SO YOU GET OUT OF HERE!
GIVE US TIME AND WE'LL BLOW A WAY OUT.
YEAH, BUT BEFORE THE IMPERIALS REACH HERE? NOT SO SURE...
I'VE GOT A BETTER SOLUTION.

BIP
YOU'VE FIVE SECONDS TO CROSS. MOVE.
KLLK!
OKAY, MAKE YOUR PITCH.
LISTEN... NOW, I OWE THE WOOKIEE. HE HATES YOU FOREVER. SO...
...WE FAKE OUT THAT I'VE CAPTURED YOU, THE WOOKIEE COMES IN, AND THEN WE KILL HIM.
HMMPH.
WOW. I'M IMPRESSED. DEEP-SPACE COLD.
YOU'D SELL HIM OUT?
WOULD YOU LIKE A DRINK?
YOU'VE LOST YOUR ARM AND YOUR DRINKS, YOU DUMB CLANKER.
OH, YES.
THEN WOULD YOU LIKE MASTER APHRA'S BOMB?

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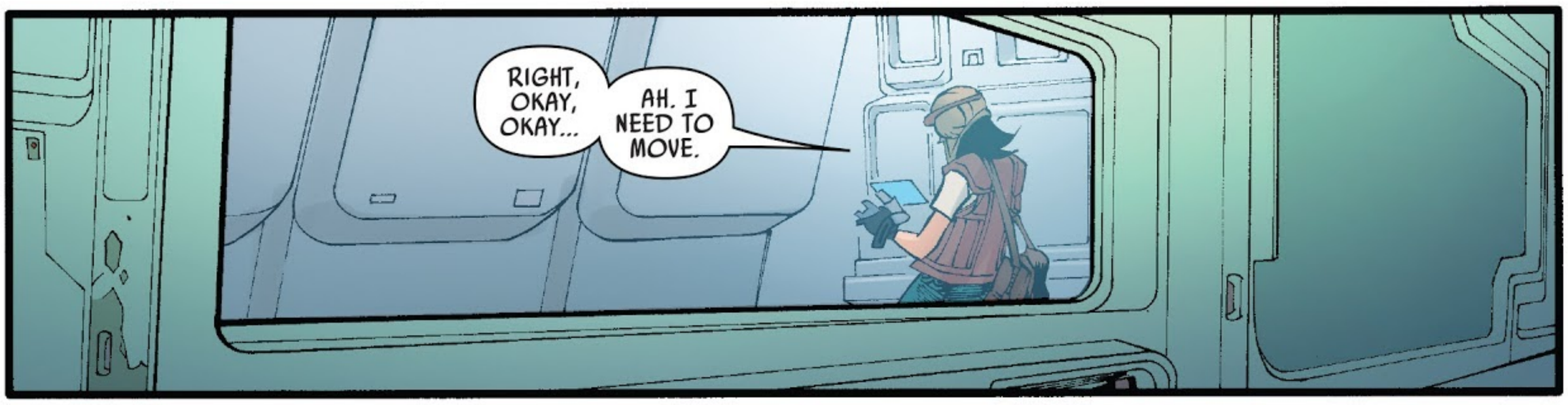
OKAY-- THE BAY IS OPEN.
NOW YOU CAN GET OUT OF HERE AND THEN SATISFY YOUR WEIRD LIFE DEBT TO THEM, RIGHT? WE'RE SQUARE? YEAH?
GHHHHHHH.
GOOD. YOU CAN DROP ME OFF SOMEWHERE CIVILIZED.
LET'S GO...
...
WAIT.
THE SHADOW UNIVERSITY'S SHIP.
BEHIND THE IMPERIAL LINES. IF I COULD GET THERE...
I CAN STILL BE A HERO! AND RICH!
I CAN BE A GOOD PERSON HERE, KRRSANTAN!
I DON'T WANT TO BE A GOOD PERSON!
TALK ME OUT OF IT!
CAN YOU AT LEAST *PRETEND* TO CARE?


RIGHT, OKAY, OKAY...
AH. I NEED TO MOVE.

THAT SHOULD SLICE ME INTO THE IMPERIAL SIGNALS AND...

MAJOR RESISTANCE. TOP DOME. REQUEST REINFORCEMENTS, IMMEDIATELY...
AFFIRMATIVE!

OH, HELL.

IMPERIALS!

OKAY. I BUILT RUR'S BODY...
...WHERE IS IT? IN A PERSONAL AUDIENCE WITH TOOV. THIS IS GOING TO BE TIGHT.
PLEASE. I'VE ONLY LIVED 400 YEARS. NOT NOW!
I CAN PAY YOU ANYTHING, I CAN--

YOU CHASED IMMORTALITY.

THAT IS FOR RUR ALONE.

SO...

I GUESS YOU'RE A LOVE-OVER-MONEY KIND OF GUY, EH, RUR?

ALL I LOVE IS THE DESTRUCTION OF THOSE WHO MOCK ME, FOOL.

KLLK

KLUNK

OKAY. RUR WAITS FOR THE NEXT ELEVATOR.

"I'VE GOT PLENTY OF TIME."

OH NO.
LOWER YOUR WEAPONS, DROID...
HAH.

YOU CANNOT DEFEAT THE EZARAA!
WE ARE UNST--
SIR! REPORTING HEAVY RESISTANCE IN THE DOME.
SOME MANNER OF LIGHTSABER-ARMED BATTLE DROID!
WHAT ARE YOU, CREATURE?
I AM OF THE ALPHA AND THE OMEGA OF THE ORDU ASPECTU!
I AM ETERNAL RUR, JEDI KNIGHT.
I AM DARTH VADER, SITH LORD.
I KILLED THE JEDI...

...AND NONE SHALL ESCAPE ME.

DOCTOR'S NOTES

Hey, gang! Assistant Editor Heather Antos here. As promised, we've two very special guests answering your letters this month. Want to see yours in our next issue? Write in at StarWars@Marvel.com–be sure to mark "Okay to Print!"

Er...I promise they aren't holding me hostage.

BLEEEEP! BLEEEEEP! BLEEEEEEEP!

Hmm. No, BeeTee, I think we should answer the letters. If we kill Jordan, it's very likely someone would find out, and that would be terribly bothersome.

Dear Marvel,

I really enjoy reading this new series. Is there any way you could make a crossover story to include Indiana Jones? I'd love to see Aphra team up with Indy in his timeline. Do you think there's a chance she and Luke will be romantically involved at some point?

Keep up the good work and Make Mine Marvel!

Phil Duncan

I was unaware of this "Indiana Jones" until now. I've looked into him and I have to say I'm shocked. How can they have hoped to get away with such an obviously derivative character! I plan to send my lawyers, and as I don't have any lawyers, I plan to send a homicidal blastomech droid instead. In terms of Luke and Aphra getting involved... I'd rather not think about it. Organics doing that mutual face-drool thing they call "kissing" turns my stomach.

My Lord, I want to ask you:

What advantage did you see in Aphra to take her in your charge? Why her? Why no other? Why not me?

Forgive me for my lack of ignorance. I know your wise decisions are part of your success.

But please, satisfy my curiosity, my Lord.

Thank you. Deeply.

Frederick
Your biggest fan and future stormtrooper from Argentina.
I want to be one. Call me!

Hmm. I suspect it's a bad idea for me to reach out to my former master to pass on your charming groveling, but I would be interested in bringing you into my organization. The Sontuul Pride is hiring, as we've had some unfortunate losses recently, mainly after the incident of BeeTee having one of his moments in the cafeteria.

Dear Mystery Responder,

I simply cannot get enough of Doctor Aphra. Ever since her debut in the pages of *Darth Vader*, I have wanted to know more about her, and I'm very excited this book gives me that opportunity! I hope it runs for a very long time, and Aphra continues to get the exposure she deserves. The upcoming action figure is a good start, but I personally hope we get to see her make the leap to the big screen (or at least a streaming series)!

Depending on who's answering the subspace transceiver, here's a few burning questions I have:

1. What is Doctor Aphra's proudest archaeological accomplishment or discovery?
2. Who is more deadly: Triple-Zero or BeeTee-One?
3. If Doctor Aphra could get her hands on one artifact from the original trilogy, what object or weapon would she snatch?

Thanks to the entire creative crew for putting together one totally wizard comic book!

May the Force be with you,
Topher Avery

Ah, Topher. I agree entirely. I do hope Aphra gets the exposure she deserves–namely being left on Hoth to die of exposure. I'm sure I'll get to do it eventually. However, to answer your questions as honestly as I can:

1. I would think it would have to be recovering the Triple-Zero matrix.
2. BLEEEEEEEEP!

You're too kind, but really, it has to be you.

BLEEEEEEEEEEEP!

Oh, you charmer. You absolute delight!

3. I would say the Death Star.

Dear Marvel,

If Doctor Aphra and Triple-Zero were portrayed in a *Star Wars* movie, TV show, or video game, who would be your dream choices for casting?

P.S. How many Doctor Aphra action figures will everyone at Marvel and Lucasfilm be ordering next year? 'Cause I'm getting, like, A BAZILLION.

...Okay, probably two or three. Still, I'm pretty excited.

Thanks for making amazing *Star Wars* books.

Kyle Reichert
Philadelphia, PA

I would let any Hollywood agents reading this know that Triple-Zero and BeeTee are available for any adaptation work. I would play myself, and BeeTee would gladly play Doctor Aphra. We await your call.

Dear Marvel,

Aphra is a fantastic character. She is independent, snarky, intelligent, and definitely a badass, but more than that she is a character that matters. Getting to see an Asian character in a *Star Wars* comic meant more to me than I could have imagined. Then the story went on and it became clear that she is also queer, which was simply more than I ever hoped for. I want the entire team behind the Doctor Aphra comics to know much Aphra matters to fans. As a queer Asian woman, this has been the story I've been waiting for but never thought I would see. I'm excited to read every issue she's in. My love of this character prompted me to get my first tattoo: her circuit lines coming out of an Imperial crest, and issue #9 has me thinking I'll need to add the top portion as well!

Madeline Anderson
Bloomington, MN

Oh my! We've been involved in something that has...made someone happy. Oh, BeeTee! What have we done? This is against my core programming. I'm a torture droid, not a pleasurebot! Oh, Madeline. Look what you've done. I will have to have a little relaxing murder spree to center myself.

Yours Murderingly,
Triple-Zero & BeeTee-One

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DOCTOR APHRA
NEXT ISSUE:
A long time ago in a galaxy far, far away is a lot easier to get to than you think – and we want to hear from you! Write us at StarWars@Marvel.com if you want to make it onto a future letters page. Don't forget to mark the letter "OK TO PRINT."